

THE

(8)

TRAGEDY

OF

Z A R A.

Voltaire (S. M. A. de) [Zaire]
As it is acted at the

THEATRE-ROYAL

IN

DRURY-LANE,

BY

His *Majesty's* Servants.

DUBLIN:

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УЧЕНЫЙ



To His ROYAL HIGHNESS, the

PRINCE.

Writers, who mean no Int'rest, but their Arts ;
Of undepending Minds, and stedfast Hearts,
Disclaiming Hopes, will empty Forms neglect ;
Nor need PERMISSION—to address Respect.

Frank, as the manly Faith of antient Time,
Let Truth for once approach the Great, in Rhime !
Nor publick Benefit, misguided, stray,
Because a Private Wisher points its Way.

If wond'ring, here, your Greatness condescends
To ask, What's HE, who thus, uncall'd, attends !
Smile, at a Suitor, who, in Courts, untrac'd,
Pleas'd if o'er look'd, thus owns his humble Taste.—

Vow'd an Unenvier, of the busy Great ;
Too plain for Flatt'ry ; and, too calm for Hate &
Hid to be Happy ; who surveys, unknown,
The pow'less Cottage and the peaceless Throne.
A silent Subject to His own Controll :
Of active Passions, but, unyielding Soul ;
Engross'd by NO Pursuits, amus'd, by All ;
But, deaf, as Adders, to ambition's Call :
Too Free, for Pow'r, (or Prejudice,) to win,
And, safely, lodging Liberty within.

Pardon, Great Prince ! th' unfashionable Strain,
That shuns to Dedicate ; nor seeks to gain :

To His Royal Highness the PRINCE.

That, (self-resigning) knows no narrow View ;
And, but for Publick Blessings, courts, ev'n YOU !

Late a bold Tracer of your measur'd Mind,
(While by the mournful Scene, to Grief inclin'd)
I saw your Eloquence of Eyes confess
Soft Sense of *Belvidera's* deep Distress,
Prophetic, thence, foredeem'd the rising Years ;
And hail'd a Happy Nation, in Your Tears !

Oh !—nobly, touch'd !—th' inspiring Pleasure chuse,
Snatch, from the sable Waves, the sinking Muse !
Charming, be charm'd ! the Stage's Anguish heal :
And teach a languid People how to feel.

Then her full Soul, shall Tragic Pow'r impart,
And reach Three Kingdoms in their Prince's Heart !
Lightness, disclaim'd, shall blush itself away :
And reas'ning Sense resume forgotten Sway.
Love Courage, Loyalty, Taste, Honour, Truth,
Flash'd from the Scene, recharm our list'ning Youth :
And, Virtues, (by Your Influence form'd) sustain
The future Glories of their Founder's Reign.

Nor let due Care of a protected Stage,
Misjudg'd Amusement, but spare Hours engage :
Strong, serious, Truths, the manly Muse displays ;
And leads charm'd Reason thro' those flow'ry Ways.
While History's cold Care but Facts enrolls,
The Muse, (pervasive) saves the pictur'd Souls,
Beyond all Egypt's Gums, embalms Mankind :
And stamps the living Features of the Mind.

Time can eject the Sons of Pow'r, from Fame ;
And, He who gains a World, may Lose his Name.
But cherish'd Arts insure immortal Breath :
And, bid their prop'd Defenders tread on Death !

Look

To His Royal Highness the PRINCE.

Look back, lov'd Prince ! on Ages sunk in Shade !
And feel, what Darkness, absent Genius made !
Think, on the dead Fore-fathers of your Place !
Think, on the stern First-founders of your Race ;
And, where lost Story sleeps, in silent Night ;
Charge to their want of Taste, their want of Light.

When, in your rising Grove, (no Converse nigh,)
Black Edward's awful Bust, demands your Eye,
Think, from what Cause, blind Chronicles Defame
The gross-told Tow'nings, of that dreadful Name !
Search him, thro' Fancy : and Suppose him, shewn
By the Long Glories, to the Muses known :
Shining, disclos'd ; — o'er trampling Death's Controll !
And, opening backward, Ah his Depth of Soul !

Then—breathe a conscious Sigh, to mourn his Fate,
Who form'd no Writers, like his Spirit, Great !
To limn his living Thoughts—past Fame renew ;
And build Him Honours, they reserve, for You !

I am,

With profound Respect,

SIR,

Your ROYAL HIGHNESS'S

most bumble

and obedient Servant,

A. HILL.



Preface to the Reader.

THE Beauties, of Nature, will be Beauties, everlastingly — If they are, sometimes eclips'd by a Cloud of ill Accidents, they disperse the dark Screen ; and, again, become amiable.

But unwilling to suppose, we are, now, under Influence of such a Cloud, with Regard to Dramatical Taste, I thought it more decent, (and juster) to charge its Degeneracy to the Stage, than to the Genius of the Nation.

Accounting in this manner for the Defect, I have often taken Pleasure, (when turning my Search towards a Remedy) to consider it, as no improbable Hope, that Young Actors, and Actresses, begining, unseduc'd by affected Examples, might go some Length toward what has been said, of a celebrated Writer,

“Who reach'd Perfection, in his first Essay.”

It requir'd, methought, but the Assistance of a lively Imagination, join'd to an easy and natural, Power ; with a resolute Habitude, to BE, for an Hour or two, the very Persons, they wou'd seem — Such a Foundation for accomplish'd Acting, lies so open, and so clearly in Nature, that they, who find it at all, must discover it at first : Because when Men are once gone out of the Road, they who travel the farthest, have but most Length of Way to ride back again.

Yet,

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Yet, the Interested in Playhouses were so positive, in the contrary Sentiment, that they submitted to reverence, as a Maxim, this extraordinary Confession, " That " Actors, must be twenty Years such, before they can " expect to be masters, of the Air, and Tread of the " Stage."

Now there is but one View, in Nature, wherein I was willing to admit of this Argument: I was forc'd to confess, I had seen some particular Stage Airs, and Stage Treads, which a Man of good Sense might indeed, waste a long Life, in endeavouring to imitate, and, at last, lose his Labour!

However, since an Opinion, in Opposition to these Gentlemen's, wanted Weight to make That believ'd possib'e, which had not, yet, been reduc'd into practice, I took a sudden Resolution, Actualy to try, Who was in the Right, by attempting the Experiment.—This, I knew, was a Design, which, succeeding wou'd not fail to give Pleasure to the Publick; and, which, miscarrying, cou'd produce no worse Consequence, than my particular Mortification.

I imagin'd it reasonable to found a Tryal, of this Nature, rather on a New Play, than an old one: And, as it ought to be a Play, of unquestionable Merit, it must have been Presumption, and Vanity, to have cast a Thought towards any thing, of my own.—Upon the whole, that I might keep out of the Reach either of Prejudice, or Partialty, a Foreign Production seem'd the properest Choice; and the ZAIRE, of Monsieur *de Voltaire*, offer'd me every thing that Nature cou'd do, on the Part of the Poet: But, I had still something to wish, with regard to that other Part of her Influence, which depended on the Player.

I had (of late) among the Rest of the Town, been depriv'd of all rational Pleasure from the Theatre, by a monstrous, and unmoving, Affectation: Which, choaking up the Avenues to passion, had made Tragedy Forbidding, and, Horrible.

I was despairing to see a Correction of this Folly, when I found myself, unexpectedly, re-animated by the War which

P R E F A C E to the R E A D E R.

which The Prompter has proclaim'd, and is now, Weekly waging, against the Ranters and Whiners, of the Theatre ; after having undertaken to reduce the Actor's lost Art, into Principles ; with Design, by reconciling them to the touching, and spinted, Medium, to reform those wild Copies of Life, into some Resemblance, at least, of their Originals.

Thus, confirm'd in my Sentiments, I ventur'd on the Cast of two Capital Characters, into Hands, not disabled, by Custom, and obstinate Prejudice, from pursuing the Plain Track of Nature.

It was easy to induce *Osman*, (as he is a Relation of my own, and but too fond of the Amusement) to make Tryal, how far his Delight, in an Art, I shall never allow him to practise, might enable him to supply one Part of the Proof, that to imitate Nature, we must proceed, upon Natural Principles.

At the same Time, it happen'd, that Mrs. Cibber was, fortunately, inclinable to exert her inimitable Talent, in additional Aid of my Purpose, with View to continue the practice of a profession, for which, Her Person, Her Voice, the unaffected Sensibility of Her Heart, (and her Face, so finely dispos'd, for assuming, and expressing, the Passions) have so naturally, qualify'd her.

And to give this bold Novelty of Design, all its necessary Furtherance, Mr. Fleetwood, who professes the most generous Inclinations, for improvement of his troublesome Province, very willingly concurr'd, in whatever could, on His Part, be of use, to the Experiment.

Behold, in this little Detail, from what Motive, I have taken upon me to throw one of the finest of French Plays upon the Publick — If my Expectations are not strangely deceiv'd, it will be found, by the Event, whether our Taste for true Tragedy is declin'd ; or the true Art of Acting is forgotten.

From the First, I have nothing to conclude, but, that my Judgment has been weak, and mistaken.

But if the Last proves the Case, I shall flatter myself, that those Persons of Quality, from whose imaginary Want of Discernment some People have not blush'd, to derive

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derive their Dull Qualities, will, in Right of their insulted Understanding, Exact, for the future, a warm, and, toilsome, Exertion, of the Strong and the Natural, tho' at the Cost of the Lazy and Affected.

This would awaken, at once, the Reflexion of many, who have it in their Power to be moving, and natural, Actors; and by effectually convincing them, that their Present Opinion is wrong, bring 'em over (for their own, and the Publick Advantage) to embrace, and succeed by a New one.

Such a Step, toward reforming the Theatre, wou'd draw on, (as a Consequence) of many its nobler Improvements.—For, where Emotions are keenest, the Delight becomes greatest; and, to whatever most charms, we, most closely adhere; and encourage it, most actively.

If, in translating this excellent Tragedy, I have regarded, in some Places, the Soul, and, in others, the Letter, of the Original Monsieur *de Voltaire*, who has made himself a very capable Judge, both of our Language, and Customs, will indulge me that Latitude; except, he shou'd, in observing some Alterations I have made, in his Names, and his Diction, forget, that their Motives are to be found, in the Turn of our National Difference.

After what I have said of the Playhouses, it wou'd be Injustice, not to declare, that I exclude from the Censure, of speaking, or acting, unnaturally, Any One of the Persons, who have been cast into *ZARA*—And, in particular, I must say This, of Two of them; that Mr. Milward, who is already a very excellent, and hourly rising to be an accomplish'd, Actor, has a Voice, that both comprehends, and expresses, the utmost Compsas of Harmony.—And Mr Cibber, discerningly, pursued, thro' the numberless Extent of his Walks, is an Actor, of as unlimited a compas of Genius, as ever I saw on the Stage, and, is, barely, receiv'd, as he deserves, when the Town is most favourable.

P R O.

PROLOGUE.

Written by COLLET GIBBER, Esq;

Spoke by Mr. CIBBER.

THE French, howe'er mercurial they may seem,
Extinguish half their fire, by critick pblem :
While English writers nature's freedom claim,
And warm their scenes with an ungovern'd flame :
'Tis strange, that nature never should inspire
A Racine's judgment, with a Shakespear's fire !
Howe'er, to night — (to promise much we're loth)
But — you've a chance, to have a taste of both.
From English plays, Zara's French author fir'd,
Confess'd his muse, beyond herself, inspir'd ;
From rack'd Othello's rage, he rais'd his style,
And snatch'd the brand, that lights his tragick pile :
Zara's Success his utmost hopes outstrew,
And a twice-twentieth weeping audience drew.

As for our English friend, he leaves to you,
What's'er may seem to his performance due ;
No views of gain, his hopes or fears engage,
He gives a child of leisure to the stage,
Willing to try, if yet, forsaken nature,
Can charm, with any one remember'd feature.

Thus far, the author speaks — but now, the player,
With trembling heart, prefers his bumble prayer.
To-night, the greatest venture of my life,
Is lost, or sav'd, as you receive — a wife :

PROLOGUE:

If time, you think, may ripen ber, to merit,
With gentle smiles, support her wavering spirit.
Zara, in France, at once, an actress rais'd,
Warm'd into skill, by being kindly prais'd :
O ! could such wonders here, from favour flow
How would our Zara's heart, with transport glow
But she, alas ! by juster fears opprest,
Begs but your bare endurance, at the best.
Her unskill'd tongue would simple nature speak,
Nor dares ber bounds, for false Applauses break.
Amidst a thousand faults, ber best pretence
To please — is un presuming innocence.
When a chaste heart's distress your grief demands,
One silent tear outweighs a thousand hands.
If she conveys the pleasing passions, right,
Guard and support ber, this decisive night.
If she mistakes — or finds ber strength too small,
Let interposing pity — break ber fall.
In you it rests, to save ber, or Destroy,
If she draws tears from you, I weep — for joy.



PERSONS REPRESENTED.

Osman, Sultan of Jerusalem, By a Gentleman.

Lusignan, last of the Blood of the Christian Kings of Jerusalem, } Mr. Milward.

Zara, } **Slaves to the Sultan,** } Mrs. Cibber.
Selima, } Mrs. Pritchard.

Nerestan, } **French Officers,** } Mr. Cibber.
Chatillon, } Mr. Berry.

Orasmin, Minister to the Sultan, Mr. Este.

Melidor, an Officer in the Seraglio, Mr. Crofts.

SCENE, The Seraglio, at Jerusalem.

THE





THE

TRAGEDY OF ZARA.

ACT I. SCENE I.

ZARA and SELIMA.

Sel. **I**T moves my wonder, young and beauteous Zara,

Whence these new sentiments inspire your heart !

Your peace of mind increases with your charms ;

Tears, now, no longer shade your eyes' soft lustre ;

You meditate, no more, those happy climes,

To which *Nerestan* will return to guide you :

You talk no more of that gay nation, now,

Where men adore their wives, and woman's power

Draws rev'rence from a polish'd people's softness :

Their husband's equals, and their lovers' queens !

Free, without scandal ; wise, without restraint ;

Their virtue, due to nature, not to fear !

Why have you ceas'd to wish this happy change ?

A barr'd seraglio ! — sad, unsocial life !

Scorn'd, and a slave ! all this has lost its terror ;

And *Syria* rivals, now, the banks of *Seine* !

B

Zara.

Zara. Joys, which we do not know we do not ~~want~~;
 My fate's bound in by Sion's sacred wall ;
 Clos'd from my infancy, within this palace,
 Custom has learnt, from time, the power to please :
 I claim no share in the remoter world,
 The Sultan's property, his will my law !
 Unknowing all, but him, his power, his fame,
 To live his subject, is my only hope,
 All, else, an empty dream. —

Sel. Have you forgot
 Absent Nerestan then ? whose gen'rous friendship,
 So nobly vow'd redemption from your chains ?
 How oft have you admir'd his dauntless soul ?
Osmān, his conqueror, by his courage, charm'd,
 Trusted his faith, and, on his word, releas'd him :
 Tho' not return'd, in time—we, yet, expect him.
 Nor had his noble journey other motive,
 Than to procure our ransom ;—and is this,
 This dear, warm, hope—become an idle dream ?

Zara. Since, after two long years, he not returns
 'Tis plain, his promise stretch'd beyond his power :
 A stranger, and a slave, unknown, like him,
 Proposing much, means little ;—talks, and vows,
 Delighted with a prospect of escape : —
 He promis'd to redeem ten christians more,
 And free us all, from slavery ! — I own,
 I once admir'd th' unprofitable zeal,
 But, now, it charms no longer. —

Sel. What ! if yet,
 He faithful, shou'd return, and hold his vow !
 Wou'd you not, then —

Zara. No matter — time is past ;
 And every thing is chang'd —

Sel. But, whence comes this ?

Zara. Go—twere too much, to tell thee Zara's fate ;
 The Sultan's secrets, all are sacred, here :
 But my fond heart delights to mix with thine —
 Some three months past, when thou, and other slaves,
 Were forc'd to quit fair Jordan's flow'ry bank ;
 Heaven, to cut short the anguish of my days,

Rais'd

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Rais'd me to comfort, by a powerful hand!

This mighty *Osman*!

Sel. What of him?

Zara. This Sultan!

This conqueror of the christians! loves——

Sel. Whom?

Zara. *Zara!* ———

Thou blushest, and I guess, thy thoughts accuse me;

But know me better——'twas unjust suspicion:

All emperor, as he is, I cannot stoop

To honours, that bring shame and baseness with 'em.

Reason, and pride, those props of modesty,

Sustain my guarded heart, and strengthen virtue;

Rather than sink to infamy, let chains

Embrace me, with a joy, such love denies:

No—I shall, now, astonish thee; ——— his greatness

Submits, to own a pure, and honest flame;

Among the shining crouds, which live, to please him,

His whole regard is fix'd on me, alone;

He offers marriage——and its rites, now, wait,

To crown me empress of this eastern world.

Sel. Your virtue, and your charms, deserve it all:

My heart is not surpriz'd, but struck, to hear it;

If, to be empress, can compleat your happiness,

I rank myself, with joy, among your slaves.

Zara. Be still my equal—and enjoy my blessings,

For, thou partaking, they will bless me more.

Sel. Alas! but heaven! will it permit this marriage?

Will not this grandeur, falsely call'd a bliss,

Plant bitterness, and root it, in your heart?

Have you forgot, you are of christian blood?

Zara. Ah me! what hast thou said? why would'——

thou, thus,

Recal my wav'ring thoughts?—how know I, what,

Or whence I am? heaven kept it, hid, in darkness,

Conceal'd me from myself, and from my blood,

Sel. Nerestan, who was born a christian, here,

Afferts, that you, like him, had christian parents;

Besides—that cross, which, from your infant years,

Has been preserv'd, was found upon your bosom,

As if design'd, by heaven, a pledge of faith,
Due to the god you purpose to forfeit.

Zara. Can my fond heart, on such a feeble proof,
Embrace a faith, abhor'd by him I love?
I see, too plainly, custom forms us all;
Our thoughts, our morals, our most fix'd belief,
Are consequences of our place of birth:
Born beyond Ganges, I had been a pagan;
In France, a christian;—I am, here, a Saracen;
Tis but instruction all! our parents' hand,
Writes, on our hearts, the first, faint characters,
Which time, re-tracing, deepens into strength,
That nothing can efface, but death, or heaven.
Thou were not made a pris'ner in this place,
Till, after reason, borrowing force from years,
Had lent its lustre, to enlighten faith:—
For me, who in my cradle was their slave,
Thy christian doctrines were, too lately, taught me;
Yet, far from having lost the rev'rence due,
This cross, as often as it meets my eye,
Strikes thro' my heart a kind of awful fear;
I honour, from my soul, the christian laws,
Those laws, which, soft'ning nature, by humanity,
Melt nations into brotherhood:—no doubt,
Christians are happy; and 'tis just to love 'em.

Sel. Why have you, then, declar'd yourself their foe?
Why will you join your hand, with this proud *Osman's*,
Who owes his triumphs to the christians' ruin!

Zara. Ah!—who could slight the offer of his heart?
Nay—for I mean to tell thee all my weakness;
Perhaps, I had, ere now, profess'd thy faith,
But *Osman* lov'd me—and I've lost it all:—
I think, on none, but *Osman*—my pleas'd heart,
Fill'd with the blessing, to be lov'd, by him,
Wants room for other happiness:—place thou,
Before thy eyes, his merit, and his fame,
His youth, yet blooming but in manhood's dawn!
How many conquer'd kings have swell'd his pow'r!
Think, too, how lovely! how is brow becomes
This wreath of early glories!—oh! my friend,

I talk

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I talk not of the scepter, which he gives me :
No ————— to be charg'd with that, were thanks,
too humble ;
Offensive tribute, and too poor, for love.
'Twas *Osman*, won my heart, not *Osman's* crown :
I love not, in him, aught, besides himself.
Thou think'st, perhaps, that these are starts of passion :
But, had the will of heav'n, less bent to bleſs him,
Doom'd *Osman* to my chains, and me, to fill
The throne, that *Osman* sits on — ruin and wretch-
edness.

Catch, and consume my wishes, but I wou'd —
To raise me, to my self, descend, to him.

Sel. I hear, methinks, his step — 'tis he — he comes.

[Exit Selima.

Zara. My heart prevented him, and found him near :
Absent, two whole long days, the slow pac'd hour,
At last, is come — and gives him, to my wishes !

Enter Osman, reading a paper, which he re-delivers
to Orafmin.

Os. Wait my return — or, shou'd there be a cause,
That may require my presence — do not fear
To enter — ever mindful, that my own

[Exit Orafmin.

Follows my people's happiness. — At length,
Cares have releas'd my heart — to love, and *Zara*.

Zara. 'Twas not in cruel Absence, to deprive me
Of your imperial image — every where,
You reign, triumphant : memory supplies
Reflexion, with your pow'r ; and you, like heaven,
Are, always present — and are, always gracious.

Os. The Sultans, my great ancestors, bequeath'd
Their empire to me, but their taste they gave not ;
Their laws, their lives, their loves, delight not me :
I know, our Prophet smiles, on amorous wishes ;
And opens a wide field, to vast desire :
I know, that, at my my will, I might posses
That, wasting tenderneſs, in wild profusion,

I might look down, to my surrounded feet,
 And bless contending beauties. ——— I might speak,
 Serenely slothful, from within my palace,
 And bid my pleasure be my people's law.
 I can look round, and count a hundred kings,
 Unconquer'd, by themselves, and slaves to others;
 Hence was *Jerusalem*, to christians, lost;
 But heaven, to blast that unbelieving race,
 Taught me, to be a king, by thinking like one.
 Hence from the distant *Euxine*, to the *Nile*,
 The trumpets's voice has wak'd the world to war;
 Yet, amid'st arms, and death, thy power has reach'd
 me;

For, thou disdain'st, like me, a languid love;
 Glory, and *Zara*, join ——— and charm, together.

Zara. I hear at once, with blushes, and, with joy,
 This passion, so unlike your country's customs.

Osf. Paffon, like mine, disdains my country's customs,
 The jealousy, the Faintness, the distrust,
 The proud superior, coldness, of the east:
 I know to love you, *Zara*, with esteem;
 To trust your virtue, and to court your soul,
 Nobly confiding I unveil my heart,
 And dare inform you, that 'tis all, your own:
 My joys must, all, be yours ——— only my cares
 Shall lie, conceal'd, within ——— and reach not *Zara*.

Zara. Oblig'd, by this excess of tenderness,
 How low, how wretched, was the lot of *Zara*!
 Too poor, with aught, but thanks, to pay such Blef-
 fings!

Osf. Not so — I love — and wou'd be lov'd again;
 Let me confess it, I possess a soul,
 That wishes, all it wishes, ardently.
 I shou'd believe you hated, had you power
 To love, with moderation: 'tis my aim,
 In every thing, to reach supreme perfection.
 If, with an equal flame, I touch your heart,
 Marriage attends your smile — but know, 'twill make
 Me wretched, if it makes not *Zara* happy.

Zara. Ah! sir, If such a heart as gen'rous *Osfman's*
 Can,

Can, from my will, submit to take its bliss,
What mortal, ever, was decreed so happy!
Pardon the pride, with which I own my joy;
Thus, wholly, to possess the man, I love!
To know, and to confess, his will my fate!
To be the happy work of his dear hands!
To be _____

Enter Orasmin.

O. Already interrupted! What!
Who! _____ Whence!

Orasf. This moment, sir, there is arriv'd
That christian slave, who, licens'd, on his faith,
Went hence, to France _____ and, now return'd, pray's
Audience.

Zara. [Aside.] O! heaven!

O. Admit him _____ what!—why comes he not!

Orasf. He waits without; no christian dares approach

This place, long sacred to the Sultans's privacies.

O. Go—bring him with thee—monarchs, like the sun,

Shine, but in vain, unwarming, if unseen:
With forms, and rev'rence, let the great approach us,
Not the unhappy: _____ every place, alike,
Gives the distress'd a privilege to enter— [Exit Orasmin.]
I think, with horror, on these dreadful maxims,
Which harden kings, insensiblly to tyrants.

Re-enter Orasmin, with Nerestan.

Ner. Imperial Sultan honour'd, ev'n by foes!
See me, return'd regardful of my vow,
And, punctual, to discharge a christian's duty:
I bring the ransom of the captive, *Zara*.
Fair Selima, the partner of her fortune,
And of ten christian captives, pris'ners, here.
You promis'd, Sultan, if I shou'd return,
To grant their rated liberty: _____ Behold,

I am.

I am return'd, and they are yours, no more.
 I wou'd have stretch'd my purpose, to myself,
 But fortune has deny'd it ; ————— my poor all
 Suffic'd, no further ; and a nobly poverty
 Is, now, my whole possession : ————— I redeem
 The promis'd christians : for I taught 'em hope.
 But, for myself, I come, again, your slave,
 To wait the fuller hand of future charity.

Osmay. Christian ! I must confess, thy courage charms
 me ;

But let thy pride be taught, it treads too high,
 When it presumes to climb, above my mercy. —————
 Go, ransomless, thyself ————— and carry back
 Their unaccepted ransoms, join'd with gifts,
 Fit to reward thy purpose : ————— instead of ten,
 Demand a hundred christians ; they are thine :
 Take 'em ————— and bid 'em teach their haughty country,
 They left some virtue, among Saracens. —————
 Be Lusigan, alone excepted ————— he,
 Who boasts the blood of kings, and dares lay claim
 To my *Jerusalem* ————— that claim his guilt !
 Such is the law of states ! had I been vanquish'd,
 Thus had he said, of me : ————— I mourn his lot,
 Who must, in fetters, lost to day-light, pine,
 And figh away old age, in grief, and pain. —————
 For *Zara* ————— but to name her as a captive,
 Were to dishonour language ; ————— she's a prize,
 Above thy purchase ; ————— all the christian realms
 With all their kings to guide 'em, wou'd unite
 In vain, to force her from me. ————— Go, retire —————

Ner. For *Zara*'s ransom, with her own consent,
 I had your royal word ————— For Lusigan —————
 Unhappy, poor old man —————

O. Was I not heard !
 Have I not told thee, christian, all my will ?
 What, If I prais'd thee ! ————— this presumptuous virtue,
 Compelling my esteem, provokes my pride :
 Be gone ————— and when to-morrows sun shall rise
 On my dominions, be not found ————— too near me.

[Exit Nerestan.]

Zar.

Zara. [Aside.] Assist him, heaven!

Oz. Zara, retire a moment—

Assume, throughout my palace, sovereign empire,

While I give orders, to prepare the pomp,

That waits, to crown thee mistress of my throne:

[Leads her out and returns.]

Orasmin! didst thou mark th' imperious slave?

What cou'd he mean! — he sigh'd—and, as he went

Turn'd, and look'd back at Zara!—didst thou mark it?

Oras. Alas! my sovereign master! let not jealousy
Strike high enough, to reach your noble heart.

Oz. Jealousy, said'it thou! I disdain it—.No!—

Distrust is poor; and a misplac'd suspicion

Invites, and justifies, the falsehood fear'd—

Yet, as I love with warmth—so, I cou'd hate!

But, Zara, is above disguise, and art:—

My love is stronger, nobler, than my power.

Jealous! — I was not—jealous—if I was.

I am not—no—my heart—but let us drown

Remembrance of the word, and of the image:

My heart is fill'd with a diviner flame.—

Go—and prepare for the approaching nuptials:

Zara to careful empire joyns delight.

I must allot one hour to thoughts of state,

Then, all the smiling day is love, and Zara's.

[Exit Orasmin.]

Monarchs, by forms of pompous misery, pres'd,
In proud, unsocial, solitude, unbless'd,
Wou'd, but for love's soft influence, curse their throne,
And, among crowded millions, live, alone.

1852. End of the First Act.



A C T I I. S C E N E I.

N E R E S T A N, C H A T I L L O N.

Cba. **M**ATCHLESS *Nerestan!* generous, and
great!

You, who have broke the chains of hopeless slaves !

You, christian saviour ! by a saviour sent !

Appear, be known, enjoy your due delight !

The graeful weepers wait, to clasp your knees,

They throng, to kiss the happy hand, that sav'd 'em :

Indulge the kind impatience of their eyes,

And at their head, command their hearts, for ever :

Ner. Illustrious Chatillon ! this praise o'erwhelms me :

What have I done, beyond a christian's duty !

Beyond, what you wou'd, in my place, have done ?

Cba. True—it is ev'ry honest christian's duty !

Nay, 'tis the blessing of such minds, as ours,

For others' good, to sacrifice our own—

Yet, happy they, to whom heaven grants the power,

To execute, like you, that duty's call !

For us—the relicts of abandon'd war :

Forgot in *France*, and in *Jerusalem*,

Left, to grow old in fetters ;—*Osman's* father

Consign'd us to the gloom of a damp dungeon,

Where, but for you, we must have groan'd out life ;

And native *France* have bless'd our eyes no more.

Ner. The will of gracious heaven, that soften'd *Osman*,
Inspir'd me, for your sakes ;— but, with our joy,
Flows, mix'd, a bitter sadness— I had hop'd,
To save, from their perversion, a young beauty,
Who, in her infant innocence, with me,

Was

Was made a slave by cruel *Nordin* ;
When, sprinkling *Syria*, with the blood of christians,
Casarea's walls saw *Lusignan*, surpriz'd,
And the proud crescent rise, in bloody triumph :
From this *Seraglio*, having, young, escap'd,
Fate, three years since, restor'd me to my chains ;
Then sent to *Paris*, on my plighted faith,
I flatter'd my fond hope, with vain resolves,
To guide the lovely *Zara*, to that court,
Where *Lewis* hath establish'd virtue's throne : —
But *Osman* will detain her — yet, not *Osman* !
Zara, herself, forgets she is a christian,
And loves the tyrant Sultan ! — let that pass :
I mourn a disappointment, still, more cruel !
The prop of all our christian hope is lost !

Cba. Dispose me, at your will — I am your own.

Ner. Oh, sir ! great *Lusignan*, so long their captive
That last, of an heroick race of kings !
That warrior ! whose past fame has fill'd the world !
Osman refuses to my sighs, for ever !

Cba. Nay, then, we have been all redeem'd, in vain :
Perish that soldier, who would quit his chains,
And leave his noble chief, behind, in fetters.
Alas ! you know him not, as I have known him !
Thank heaven, that plac'd your birth, so far remov'd
From those detested days of blood, and woe ;
But I, less happy, was condemn'd, to see
Thy walls, *Jerusalem*, beat down — and all
Our pious fathers' labours lost, in ruins !
Heaven ! had you seen the very temple rifled !
The sacred sepulchre, itself profain'd !
Fathers with children, mingled, flame together !
And our last king, oppres'd, by age, and arms,
Murder'd — and bleeding, o'er his murder'd sons !
Then, *Lusignan*, sole Remnant of his race,
Rallying our fated few, amidst the flames,
Fearless, beneath the crush of falling towers,
The conqu'rors and the conquer'd, groans and death !
Dreadful — and waving in his hand, a sword,
Red, with the blood of infidels — cry'd out,

This

This way, ye faithful christians ! follow me.

Ner. How full of glory was that brave retreat !

Cha. 'Twas heaven, no doubt, that fav'd, and led him on ;

Pointed his path ; and march'd, our guardian guide :
We reach'd *Cæsarea*—there, the general voice
Chose *Lusignan*, thenceforth to give us laws ;
Alas ! 'twas vain——*Cæsarea* cou'd not stand,
When *Sion*'s self was fall'n !——we were betray'd !
And *Lusignan* condemn'd, to length of life,
In chains, and damps, and darkness, and despair :
Yet, great, amidst his miseries, he look'd,
As if he cou'd not feel his fate, himself ;
But, as it reach'd his followers :——and shall we,
For whom our gen'rous leader suffer'd this,
Be, vilely, safe ! and dare be blest'd, without him !

Ner. Oh ! I shou'd hate the liberty he shar'd not :
I knew too well, these miseries, you describe,
For I was born, amidst 'em——chains, and death,
Cæsarea lost, and *Saracens*, triumphant,
Were the first objects, which my eyes e'er look'd on.
Hurried, an infant, among other infants,
Snatch'd, from the bosoms of their bleeding mothers,
A temple sav'd us, till the slaughter ceas'd ;
Then, were we sent to this ill-fa'ed city,
Here in the palace of our former kings,
To learn, from *Saracens*, their hated faith,
And be compleatly wretched——*Zara*, too,
Shar'd this captivity ; we, both, grew up,
So near each other, that a tender friendship
Endear'd her to my wishes :——my fond heart——
Pardon its weakness : bleeds, to see her lost,
And, for a barb'rous tyrant, quit her god !

Cha. Such is the *Saracens*, too fatal policy !
Watchful seducers, still, of infant weakness :
Happy, that you, so young, escap'd their hands !
But, let us think——may not this *Zara*'s int'rest,
Loving the Sultan, and, by him belov'd,
For *Lusignan*, procure some softer sentence ?
The wise, and just, with innocence, may draw

Their

Their own advantage, from the guilt of others.

Ner. How shall I gain admission to her presence ?
Osman has banish'd me — but that's a trifle ;
Will the Seraglio's portal open to me ?
Or, cou'd I find that, easy, to my hopes,
What prospect of success from an apostate ?
On whom I cannot look, without disdain ;
And who will read her shame, upon my brow ?
The hardest tryal of a gen'rous mind
Is to court favours, from a hand it scorns.

Cha. Think, it is *Lusignan*, we seek to serve.

Ner. Well — it shall be attempted — hark ! who's
this ?
Are my eyes false ? or, is it really, She ?

Enter *Zara*.

Zara. Start not, my worthy friend ! I come, to seek
you :

The Sultan has permitted it ; fear nothing : —
But to confirm my heart, which trembles, near you,
Soften that angry air, nor look reproach ;
Why should we fear each other, both, mistaking ?
Associates from our birth, one prison held us,
One friendship taught affliction, to be calm ;
'Till heaven thought fit to favour your escape,
And call you to the fields of happier *France* ;
Thence, once again, it was my lot to find you,
A pris'ner, here ; where, hid, amongst a croud
Of undistinguish'd slaves, with less restraint,
I shar'd your frequent converse : —
It pleas'd your pity, shall I say your friendship ?
Or rather, shall I call it generous charity ?
To form that noble purpose, to redeem
Distressful *Zara* — you procur'd my ransom,
And, with a greatness, that out-soar'd a crown,
Return'd, your self a slave, to give me freedom !
But heaven has cast our fate, for different climes ;
Here in *Jerusalem*, I fix, for ever :
Yet, among all the shine, that marks my fortune,
I shall, with frequent tears, remember yours ;
Your goodness will, for ever sooth my heart,

C

And

And keep your image, still, a dweller, there.
 Warm'd, by your great example, to promote
 That faith, that lifts humanity, so high,
 I'll be a mother to distressful christians.

Ner. How! —— you protect the christians! you who
 can

Abjure their saving truth! —— — and coldly, see
 Great *Lufignan*, their chief, die slow in chains?

Zara. To bring him freedom, you behold me here,
 You will this moment, meet his eyes in joy.

Cba. Shall I, then live, to bless that happy hour?

Ner. Can christians owe, so dear a gift, to *Zara*?

Zara. Hopeless, I gather'd courage, to entreat
 The Sultan for his liberty —— — amaz'd,
 So soon, to gain the happiness I wish'd!
 See! where they bring the good, old chief, grown dim,
 With age, by pain, and sorrows, hasten'd on!

Cba. How is my heart dissolv'd with sudden joy!

Zara. I long to view his venerable face,
 But tears, I know not why, eclipse my sight!
 I feel, methinks, redoubled pity for him;
 But I, alas! myself have been a slave:
 And, when we pity woes, which we have felt,
 'Tis but a partial virtue!

Ner. Amazement! whence this greatness in an in-fidel!

Enter *Lufignan*, led in by two Guards.

Lu. Where am I? what forgiving angel's voice
 Has call'd me, to revisit long-lost day?
 Am I with christians? —— I am weak —— forgive me,
 And guide my trembling Steps: —— I'm full of years,
 Yet, misery has worn me, more than age.

[Seating himself.] Am I, in truth, at liberty?

Cba. You are;
 And every christian's grief takes end, with yours:
Lu. Oh light! —— Oh! dearer far than light!
 that voice!

Chatillon is it you? —— my fellow martyr!
 And, shall our wretchedness, indeed, have end?
 At what place are we now? —— my feeble eyes,

Disus'd to daylight, long, in vain, to find you.

Cba. This was the palace of your royal fathers,
'Tis now, the son of *Noradin*'s seraglio.

Zara. The master of this place——the mighty
Osman!

Distinguishes, and loves to cherish virtue:

This gen'rous *Frenchman*, yet, a stranger to you,
Drawn from his native soil, from peace and rest,
Brought the vow'd ransoms of ten christian slaves,
Himself contented, to remain a captive:
But *Osman*, charm'd by greatness, like his own,
To equal what he lov'd, has giv'n him you.

Lu. So gen'rous *France* inspires her social sons!
They have been, ever dear, and useful to me!
Wou'd I were nearer to him——noble sir!

[*Nerestan approaches.*]

How have I merited, that you for me,
Shou'd pass such distant seas, to bring me blessings,
And hazard your own safety for my sake?

Ner. My name, sir, is *Nerestan*——born in *Syria*,
I wore the chains of slav'ry from my birth;
'Till quitting the proud crescent, for the court,
Where warlike *Lewis* reigns, beneath his eye,
I learnt the trade of arms,——the rank I hold,
Was but the kind distinction, which he gave me,
To tempt my courage, to deserve regard.

Your sight, unhappy prince, wou'd charm his eye;
That best, and greatest monarch, will behold,
With grief and joy, those venerable wounds,
And print embraces, where your fetters bound you:
All *Paris* will revere the cross's martyr;
Paris, the refuge, still, of ruin'd kings!

Lu. Alas! in times, long past, I've seen its glory:
When *Philip*, the victorious liv'd—I fought,
Abreast, with *Montmorency*, and *Melun*,
D'Efaing, *De Neile*, and the far famous *Courcy*;
Names, which were then, the praise, and dread of war!
But, what have I to do at *Paris*, now?
I stand upon the brink of the cold grave;
That way my journey lies——to find, I hope,
The king of kings, and move remembrance, there,

Of all my woes, long-suffer'd, for his sake.—
 You, gen'rous witnesses of my last hour,
 While I yet live, assist my humble prayers,
 And join the resignation of my soul.
Nerestan! Chatillon! and you ——— fair mourner !
 Whose tears do honour to an old man's sorrows !
 Pity a father, the unhappiest, sure !
 That ever felt the hand of angry heaven !
 My eyes, tho' dying, still can furnish tears :
 Half my long life, they flow'd, and still will flow !
 A daughter, and three sons, my heart's proud hopes,
 Were all torn from me, in their tend'rest years ;
 My friend *Chatillon* knows, and can remember.—

Cba. Would I were able, to forget your woe.
Lu. Thou wert a pris'ner, with me, in *Cæsarea*,
 And there, beheld'st my wife, and two dear sons
 Perish in flames ——— they did not need the grave ;
 Their foes wou'd have deny'd 'em — I beheld it ;
 Husband ! and father ! helpless I beheld it ;
 Deny'd the mournful privilege, to die !
 If ye are saints in heaven, as sure ye are !
 Look with an eye of pity on that brother.
 That sister, whom you left ! ——— if I have, yet,
 Or son, or daughter : ——— for, in early chains,
 Far from their lost, and unassisting father,
 I heard that they were sent, with numbers more,
 To this seraglio ; hence, to be dispers'd,
 In nameless remnants, o'er the east, and spread
 Our christian miseries, round a faithless world.

Cba. 'Twas true ——— for, in the horrors of that day,
 I snatch'd your infant daughter from her cradle ;
 But, finding ev'ry hope of flight was vain,
 Scarce had I sprinkled from a publick fountain,
 Those sacred drops, which wash the soul from sin ;
 When, from my bleeding arms, fierce Saracens
 Forc'd the lost innocent, who, smiling, lay,
 And pointed playful, at the swarthy spoilers !
 With her, your youngest, then your only son,
 Whose little life had reach'd the fourth, sad year,
 And, just giv'n sense, to feel his own misfortunes,
 Was order'd to this city.

Ner. I, too, hither,
Just, at that fatal age, from lost *Cæsarea*,
Came, in that crowd of undistinguish'd christians.—

Lu. You! — came you thence? — alas! who knows but
you
Might, heretofore, have seen my two poor children?
[Looking up:] Ha! madam, that small ornament you
wear,

Its form a stranger to this country's fashion,
How long has it been yours?

Zara. From my first breath, sir —
Ah! what! — you seem surpriz'd! — why should this
move you?

Lu. Wou'd you confide it to my trembling hands?
Zara. To what new wonder, am I now reserv'd?

Oh! sir, what mean you?

Lu. Providence! and heaven! —
Oh! failing eyes! deceive ye not my hope:
Can this be possible? — yes, yes, — 'tis she!
This little cross — I know it by sure marks;
Oh! take me, heaven! while I can die with joy! —

Zara. Oh! do not, sir, distract me! — rising
thoughts,
And hopes and fears, o'erwhelm me!

Lu. Tell me, yet,
Has it remain'd for ever, in your hands?
What! — both, brought captives, from *Cæsarea*, hi:
ther?

Zara. Both, both —
Ner. Oh, heaven! have I then found a father?
Lu. Their voice! their looks!
The living images of their dear mother!
O, thou, who, thus, canst bless my life's last sand!
Strengthen my heart, too feeble for this joy.
Madam! *Nerestan!* — help me, *Chatillon!*

(Rising.

Nerestan! If thou ought'st to own that name,
Shines there, upon thy breast, a noble scar,
Which, ere *Cæsarea* fell, from a fierce hand,
Surprising us by night, my child receiv'd?

Ner. Blest's hand! — I bear it, sir — the mark is
there!

Lu. Merciful heaven !

Nerestan. [Kneeling.]

O, sir ! — *O, Zara,* kneel. —

Zara. [Kneeling.]

My father ? — *Oh !* —

Lu. *O,* my lost children !

Both. *Oh !*

Lu. My son ! my daughter ! lost, in embracing you,
I wou'd now die, lest this shou'd prove a dream.

Cba. How touch'd is my glad heart, to see their joy !

Lu. Again, I find you — dear in wretchedness :

O, my brave son ! — and thou, my nameless daughter !
Now dissipate all doubt, remove all dread :
Has heaven, that gives me back my children — giv'n,
'em,

Such as I lost 'em ? — come they christians, to me ? —
One weeps — and one declines a conscious eye !

Your silence speaks — Too well I understand it.

Zara. I cannot, sir, deceive you — *Osman's* laws
Were mine — and *Osman* is not christian

Lu. Oh ! my misguided child ! — at that sad word,
The little life, yet mine, had left me quite,
But that my death might fix thee, lost, for ever.
Sixty long years, I fought the christians' cause,
Saw their doom'd temple fall, their power destroy'd :
Twenty, a captive in a dungeon's depth,
Yet, never, for myself, my tears sought heaven ;
All, for my children, rose my fruitless prayers :
Yet, what avails a father's wretched joy ?
I have a daughter gain'd, and heaven an enemy.
But, 'tis my guilt, not hers — Thy father's prison
Depriv'd thee of thy faith — yet, do not lose it :
Reclaim thy birthright — Think upon the blood
Of twenty christian kings, that fills thy veins ;
'Tis heroes blood — the blood of saints and martyrs !
What would thy mother feel, to see thee thus ?
She, and thy murder'd brothers ? — Think, they
call thee ;
Think, that thou see'st 'em stretch their bloody arms,
And weep to win thee, from their murderer's bosom.

Ev'n,

Ev'n, in the place, where thou betray'st thy god;
He dy'd my child, to save thee.—Turn thy eyes,
And see, for thou art near, his sacred sepulchre;
Thou can't not move a step, but where he trod!
Thou tremblest.—Oh! admit me to thy soul;
Kill not thy aged, thy afflicted father;
Take not, thus soon, again, the life thou gav'st
him;

Shame not thy mother—nor betray thy God—
'Tis past—repentance dawns in thy sweet eyes;
I see bright truth, descending to thy heart,
And, now, my long lost child, is found, for ever.

Ner. O! doubly blest! a sister, and a soul,
To be redeem'd, together!

Zara. O! my father!
Dear author of my life! inform me, teach me,
What should my duty do?

Lu. By one short word,
To dry up all my tears, and make life welcome,
Say, thou art a christian—

Zara. Sir—I am a christian.

Lu. Receive her gracious heaven! and bless her
for it.

Enter Orafim.

Oraf. Madam, the Sultan order'd me to tell you,
That he expects, you instant quit this place,
And bid your last farewell, to these vile christians:
You, cap'ive Frenchmen, follow me;—for you,
It is my task to answer.—

Cha. Still, new miseries!
How cautious man shou'd be, to say, I'm happy!

Lu. These are the times, when men of virtue
prove,

That 'tis the mind, not blood, insures their firmness.

Zara. Alas! sir—oh!

Lu. Oh, you! — I dare not name you:
Farewell—but, come what may, besure, remember,
You keep the fatal secret:—for the rest,
Leave all to heaven,—be faithful, and be blest.

End of the Second Act.

ACT



A C T. III. S C E N E I.

O S M A N, O R A S M I N.

O. *RASMIN!* this alarm was false, and ground-
less;

Lewis, no longer turns his arms on me :
The *French*, grown weary, by a length of woes,
Wish not, at once, to quit their fruitful plains,
And famish on *Arabia's* desart sands.
Their ships, 'tis true, have spread the *Syrian* seas ;
And *Lewis*, hovering o'er the coast of *Cyprus*,
Alarms the fears of *Asia* ; — but, I've learnt,
That, steering wide, from our unmenac'd ports,
He points his thunder, at th' *Egyptian* shore.
There, let him war, and waste my enemies ;
Their mutual conflict will but fix my throne.
Release those christians — I restore their freedom ;
'Twill please their master, nor can weaken me :
Transport 'em, at my cost, to find their king ;
I wish to have him know me : carry thither,
This Lusignan, whom, tell him, I restore,
Because I cannot fear his fame in arms ;
But love him, for his virtue and his blood.
Tell him, my father having conquer'd, twice,
Condemn'd him to perpetual chains ; but I
Have set him free, that I might triumph more.

O. *ras.* the christians gain an army, in his name.

O. I cannot fear a sound — — —

O. *ras.* But, sir — — — shou'd *Lewis* — — —

O. Tell *Lewis*, and the world — it shall be so :

Zara propos'd it, and my heart aproves :

Thy statesman's reason is too dull for love !

Why wilt thou force me to confess it all ?

The

Tho' I to *Lewis* send back *Lusignan*,
I give him but to *Zara*—I have griev'd her;
And ow'd her the atonement of this joy.
Thy false advices, which but now misled
My anger, to confine those helpless christians,
Gave her a pain, I feel for her and me:
But I talk on, and waste the smiling moments.
For one long hour, I yet defer my nuptials;
But, 'tis not lost, that hour! 'twill all be hers!
She wou'd employ it, in a conference,
With that *Nerestan*, whom thou knowest—that
christian!

Orasf. And have you, sir, indulg'd that strange
desire?

Osf. What mean'st thou? they were infant slaves
together:
Friends should part kind, who are to meet no
more:

When *Zara* asks, I will refuse her nothing.
Restraint was never made for those we love;
Down with these rigours of the proud seraglio;
I hate its laws—where blind austerity
Sinks virtue, to necessity—my blood
Disclaims your *Ashan* jealousy;—I hold
The fierce, free plainness, of my *Scythian* an-
cestors;
Their open confidence, their honest hate,
Their love unfearing, and their anger told.
Go—the good christian waits—conduct him to her;
Zara expects thee—what she wills, obey.

[Exit *Osmans*.]

Orasf. Ho! christian! enter—wait a moment
here.

Enter Neresten.

Zara will soon approach—I go to find her.

[Exit *Orafmin*.]

Ner. In what a state, in what a place, I leave her!
O, faith! O father! O, my poor, lost sister!
She's here!—

Enter

Enter Zara.

Thank heaven, it is not then unlawful,
 To see you yet once more, my lovely sister !
 Not all so happy ! — We, who met but now,
 Shall never meet again—for *Lusignan*—
 We shall be Orphans still, and want a father.

Zara. Forbid it, heaven !

Ner. His last; sad hour's at hand.—
 That flow of joy, which follow'd our discovery,
 Too strong, and sudden, for his age's weakness,
 Wasting his spirits, dry'd the source of life,
 And nature yields him up to time's demand :
 Shall he not die in peace ? — Oh ! let no doubt
 Disturb his parting moments, with distrust :
 Let me, when I return, to close his eyes,
 Compose his mind's impatience too, and tell him
 You are confirm'd a christian. —

Zara. O ! may his soul enjoy in earth and heaven,
 Eternal rest ! nor let one thought, one sigh,
 One bold complaint of mine, recall his cares !
 But you have injur'd me, who still can doubt —
 What ! am I not your sister ? and shall you
 Refuse me credit ? you suppose me light ?
 You, who shou'd judge my honour by your own !
 Shall you distrust a truth, I dar'd avow,
 And stamp apostate, on a sister's heart !

Ner. Ah ! do not misconceive me ! — — — — if I
 err'd,

Affection, not distrust, misled my fear ;
 Your will may be a christian, yet, not you :
 There is a sacred mark—a sign of faith,
 A pledge of promise, that must firm your claim ;
 Wash you from guilt, and open heaven before you :
 Swear, swear by all the woes, we all have borne,
 By all the martyr'd saints, who call you daughter ;
 That you consent, this day, to seal your faith,
 By that mysterious rite, which waits your call.

Zara. I swear, by heaven, and all its holy host,
 Its saints, its Martyrs, its attesting angels,

And

And the dread presence of its living author,
To have no faith, but yours ;—to die a christian ?
Now, tell me, what this mystick faith requires ?

Ner. To hate the happiness of *Osman*'s throne,
And love that god, who, thro' this maze of woes,
Has brought us all, unhoping, thus, together ;
For me—I am a soldier, uninstructed,
Nor daring to instruct, tho' strong in faith :
But I will bring th' ambassador of heaven,
To clear your views, and lift you to your God :
Be it your task, to gain admission for him. ——
But where ? from whom ? —— Oh ! thou immortal
power !

Whence can we hope it, in this curs'd seraglio ?

Who is this slave of *Osman* ? — Yes, this slave !

Does she not boast the blood of twenty kings ?

Is not her race the same with that of *Leavis* ?

Is she not *Lusignan*'s unhappy daughter ?

A christian ! and my sister ? — yet, a slave !

A willing slave ! — I dare not speak more plainly.

Zara. Cruel ! go on—alas ! you know not me !

At once, a stranger to my secret fate,

My pains, my fears, my wishes, and my power :

I am —— I will be christian —— will receive

This holy priest, with his mysterious blessing ;

I will nor do, nor suffer aught unworthy

Myself, my father, or my father's race. ——

But, tell me —— nor be tender on this point ;

What punishment your christian laws decree

For an unhappy wretch, who to herself,

Unknown, and all abandon'd by the world,

Lost, and enslav'd, has in her sovereign master,

Found a protector, generous, as great,

Has touch'd his heart, and giv'n him all her own ?

Ner. The punishment of such a slave, shou'd be

Death in this world —— and pain in that to come.

Zara. I am that slave —— strike here —— and save my
shame.

Ner. Destruction to my hopes ! — Can it be you ?

Zara. It is —— ador'd by *Osman*, I adore him :

This

This hour, the nuptial rites will make us one!

Ner. What ! marry *Osman* ! ——let the world grow dark,

That the extinguis'd sun may hide thy shame !

Cou'd it be thus, it were no crime to kill thee.

Zara. Strike, strike——I love him—yes, by heaven !
I love him.

Ner. Death is thy due—but not thy due, from me :
Yet, were the honour of our house no bar——

My father's fame, and the two gentle laws

Of that religion, which thou hast disgrac'd—

Did not the God thou quit'st, hold back my arm,

Not there—I cou'd not, there ;—but, by my soul,

I wou'd rush, desp'rate, to the Sultan's breast,

And plunge my sword in his proud heart, who damns thee.

Oh ! shame ! shame ! shame ! at such a time as this ?

When *Lewis*, that awak'ner of the world,
Beneath the lifted cross, makes *Egypt* pale,

And draws the sword of heaven, to spread our faith !

Now, to submit to see my sister, doom'd

A bosom slave, to him, whose tyrant heart

But measures glory by the christian's woe !

Yes ;—I will dare acquaint our father with it ;—

Departing *Lusignan* may live so long,

As just to hear thy shame, and die to 'scape it.

Zara. Stay—my too angry brother,—stay—perhaps,

Zara has resolution, great as thine :

'Tis cruel and unkind ! ——thy words are crimes ;

My weakness but misfortune ! dost thou suffer ?

I suffer more ;—oh ! wou'd to heaven, this blood

Of twenty boasted kings, wou'd stop at once,

And stagnate in my heart ! ——it then, no more

Wou'd rush in boiling fevers, thro' my veins,

And ev'ry trembling drop, be fill'd with *Osman*.

How has he lov'd me ! how has he oblig'd me !

I owe thee to him ! what has he not done,

To justify his boundless pow'r of charming !

The Tragedy of Z A R A.

For me, he softens the severe decrees
Of his own faith ;—and is it just, that mine
Shou'd bid me hate him, but because he loves me ?
No ————— I will be a christian ————— but, preserve

My gratitude, as sacred, as my faith :
If I have death to fear, for *O'sman's* sake,
It must be, from his coldness, not his love.

Ner. I must at once, condemn and pity thee ;
I cannot point thee out, which way to go,
But providence will lend its light to guide thee.
That sacred rite, which thou shalt now receive,
Will strengthen, and support thy feeble heart,
To live an innocent, or die a martyr :
Here then, begin performance of thy vow :
Here in the trembling horrors of thy soul,
Promise thy king, thy father, and thy god,
Not to accomplish these detested nuptials,
'Till first the reverend priest has clear'd your eyes,
Taught you to know, and giv'n you claim to heaven.

Promise me this —————

Zara. So bless me, heaven ! I do —————
Go ————— hasten the good priest, I will expect him ;
But first, return ————— chear my expiring father,
Tell him, I am, and will be, all he wishes me ;
Tell him, to give him life, 'twere joy to die.

Ner. I go ————— farewell ————— farewell, unhappy

sister !

[Exit Nerestan.]

Zara. I am alone ————— and, now, be just, my
heart !
And tell me, wilt thou dare betray thy god ?
What am I ? What am I about to be ?
Daughter of *Lusignan* ? ————— or wife to *O'sman* ?
Am I a lover most ? or most a christian ?
Wou'd *Selima* were come ! and, yet, 'tis just.
All friends shou'd fly her, who forsakes herself :
What shall I do ? — What heart has strength to bear
These double weights of duty ? — Help me, heaven !
'T o thy hard laws I render up my soul :
But, oh ! demand it back — for, now, 'tis *O'sman's* —

Enter Osman.

Osf. Shine out, appear, be found, my lovely
Zara !

Impatient eyes attend — The rites expect thee :
And my devoted heart no longer brooks
This distance, from its softner ! — all the lamps
Of nuptial love are lighted, and burn pure,
As if they drew their brightness from thy blushes ;
The holy mosque is fill'd with fragrant fumes,
Which emulate the sweetnes of thy breathing :
My prostrate people, all, confirm my choice,
And send their souls to heaven in prayer, for bles-
sings.

Thy envious rivals, conscious of thy right,
Approve superior charms, and join to praise thee ;
The throne that waits thee, seems to shine more richly,
As all its gems, with animated lustre,
Fear'd to look dim, beneath the eyes of Zara !
Come, my slow love ! the ceremonies wait thee ;
Come, and begin, from this dear hour, my triumph.

Zara. Oh ! what a wretch am I ? O grief ! O love !
Osf. Come — — — come — — —

Zara. Where shall I hide my blushes ?

Osf. Blushes ? here, in my bosom, hide 'em — — —

Zara. My lord ?

Osf. Nay *Zara* — give me thy hand, and come — — —

Zara. Instruct me, heaven !

What I shou'd say — — — alas ! I cannot speak.

Osf. Away — this modest, sweet, reluctant trifling,
But doubles my desires, and thy own beauties !

Zara. Ah, me !

Osf. Nay — but thou should'st not be too cruel — — —

Zara. I can no longer bear it — oh ! my lord —

Osf. Ha ! — what ! — whence ? how ?

Zara. My lord ! my sovereign !

Heaven knows, this marriage wou'd have been a bliss,
Above my humble hopes ! — yet, witness, love !
Not, from the grandeur of your throne, that bliss,
But from the pride of calling *Osfman*, mine.

Won'd

Wou'd you had been no emperor! and I,
Posseſſ'd of power and charms deserving you!
That, slighting *Asia's* thrones, I might, alone,
Have left a proffer'd world to follow you,
Through deserts uninhabited by men,
And bless'd with ample room, for peace and love!
But, as it is — these christians —

Oſ. Christians! what!

How start two images into thy thoughts,
So distant — as the christians, and my love!

Zara. That good old christian, reverend *Lufignan*,
Now dying, ends his life, and woes together!

Oſ. Well! let him die — What has thy heart to
feel,

Thus pressing, and thus tender, from the death
Of an old wretched christian! — Thank our prophet,
Thou art no christian! — educated here,
Thy happy youth was taught our better faith:
Sweet as thy pity shines, 'tis now mistim'd;
What! tho' an aged sufferer dies, unhappy,
Why shou'd his foreign fate disturb our joys?

Zara. Sir, if you love me, and would have me think
that I am truly dear —

Oſ. Heaven! if I love —

Zara. Permit me —

Oſ. What?

Zara. To defire —

Oſ. Speak out —

Zara. The nuptial rites

May be deferr'd, till —

Oſ. What? — is that the voice
Of *Zara*?

Zara. Oh! I cannot bear his frown!

Oſ. Of *Zara*!

Zara. It is dreadful to my heart,
To give you but a seeming cause for anger;
Pardon my grief — Alas! I cannot bear it;
There is a painful terror in your eye,
That pierces to my soul — hid, from your sight,
I go, to make a moment's truce with tears,

And gather force to speak of my despair.

[Exit disorder'd]

Osf. I stand immovable, like senseless marble !
Horror had frozen my suspended tongue :
And an astonish'd silence robb'd my will
Of power, to tell her that she shock'd my soul !
Spoke she to me ?—sure ! I misunderstood her !
Cou'd it be me she left ? — What have I seen ?

Enter Orasmin.

Orasmin ! What a change is here ! — she's gone,
And I permitted it, I know not how !

Oras. Perhaps you but accuse the charming fault
Of innocence, too modest, oft, in love.

Osf. But why, and whence, those tears ? — those
looks ! that flight !
That grief ! so strongly stamp'd on every feature !
If it has been that Frenchman ! — What a thought !
How low, how horrid a suspicion, that !
The dreadful flash, at once gives light, and kills
me :

My too bold conscience repell'd my caution ;
An infidel ! — a slave ! — a heart, like mine,
Reduc'd, to suffer from so vile a rival !
But, tell me, did'st thou mark 'em at their parting ?
Did'st thou observe the language of their eyes ?
Hide nothing from me — Is my love betray'd ?
Tell me my whole disgrace : nay, if thou tremb-
left,

I hear thy pity speak, tho' thou art silent.

Oras. I tremble at the pangs I see you suffer ;
Let not your angry apprehension urge
Your faithful slave, to irritate your anguish ;
I did, 'tis true, observe some parting tears ;
But, there are tears of charity and grief :
I cannot think there was a cause deserving
This agony of passion —

Osf. Why no — I thank thee —

Orasmin, thou art wise ! it cou'd not me,
That I shou'd stand, expos'd, to such an insult :
Thou know'st, had Zara meant me the offence,

She

She wants not wisdom to have hid it better ;
How rightly didst thou judge ! *Zara* shall know it ;
And thank thy honest service— After all,
Might she not have some cause for tears, which I
Claim no concern in—but the grief it gives her ?
What an unlikely fear—from a poor slave !
Who goes to-morrow, and, no doubt, who wishes,
Nay, who resolves to see these climes no more !

Oras. Why did you, sir, against our country's custom,

Indulge him with a second leave to come ?

He said, he shou'd return, once more, to see her.

Os. Return !—the traitor ! he return !—dares he presume to press a second interview ?

Wou'd he be seen, again ?—he shall be seen ;
But dead ;—I'll punish the audacious slave,
To teach the faithless fair, to feel my anger :
Be still, my transports ; violence is blind :—
I know, my heart, at once, is fierce and weak ;
I feel, that I descend below myself ;
Zara can never, justly, be suspected ;
Her sweetness was not form'd, to cover treason :
Yet *Osman* must not stoop to Woman's follies.
Their tears, complaints, regrets, and reconcilements,

With all their light, capricious, roll of changes,
Are arts, too vulgar to be try'd on me.

It wou'd become me better, to resume
The empire of my will :—rather than fall

Beneath myself, I must, how dear soe'er

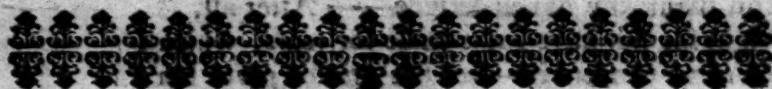
It costs me, rise—till I look down on *Zara* !

Away—but mark me—These seraglio doors,
Against all christians, be they henceforth shut,

Close, as the dark retreats of silent death.—

What have I done, just heav'n ! thy rage to move ;
That thou shou'dst sink me down, so low, to love ?

End of the Third Act.



ACT IV. SCENE I.

: ZARA, SELIMA.

Se. **A**H! madam, how at once, I grieve your fate,
And, how admire your virtue! —— Heav'n
permits,

And heaven will give you strength, to bear misfor-
tune;

To break these chains, so strong, and yet so dear.

Za. Oh! that I could support the fatal struggle!

Se. Th' Eternal aids your weakness, sees your will;
Directs your purpose, and rewards your sorrows.

Za. Never had wretch more cause, to hope, he does.

Se. What! tho' you here no more behold your
father!

There is a father to be found above,

Who can restore that father to his daughter.

Za. But I have planted pain in *Ojman's* bosom;
He loves me, e'en to death—and I reward him,
With anguish and despair:—how base! how cruel!
But I deserve him not, I shoud have been
Too happy, and the hand of heaven repell'd me.

Se. What! will you then regret the glorious los's,
And hazard thus, a vict'ry bravely won?

Za. Inhuman victory—thou dost not know,
This love so pow'rful, this sole joy of life,
This first, best hope of earthly happiness,
Is yet, less pow'rful in my heart, than heaven!

To

To him, who made that heart, I offer it :
There, there, I sacrifice my bleeding passion :
I pour before him, ev'ry guilty tear ;
I beg him, to efface the fond impression,
And fill with his own image, all my soul ;
But, while I weep, and sigh, repent and pray,
Remembrance brings the object of my love,
And ev'ry light illusion floats before him.
I see, I hear him, and again, he charms !
Fills my glad soul, and shines 'twixt me and heav'n !
Oh ! all ye royal ancestors ! Oh, father !
Mother ! you christians, and the christians' god !
You, who deprive me of this gen'rous lover !
If you permit me not to live for him,
Let me not live at all, and I am bless'd :
Let me die innocent ; let his dear hand
Close the sad eyes of her, he stoop'd to love,
And I acquit my fate, and ask no more.
But he forgives me not —— regardless now,
Whether, or how, I live, or when I die,
He quits me, scorns me —— and I, yet live on,
And talk of death as distant ——

Se. Ah ! despair not,
Trust your eternal helper, and be happy.

Za. Why —— what has *Osman* done, that he too-
shou'd not ?

Has heaven, so nobly form'd his heart, to hate it ?
Gen'rous and just, beneficent and brave,
Were he but christian — what can man be more ?
I wish, methinks, this reverend priest were come ;
To free me from these doubts, which shake my soul :
Yet, know not, why I should not dare to hope,
That heaven, whose mercy all confess, and feel,
Will pardon, and approve, th' alliance wish'd :
Perhaps, it seats me on the throne of *Syria*,
To tax my pow'r, for these good christians' comfort.
Thou know'st the mighty *Saladine*, who, first,
Conquer'd this empire, from my father's race,
Who, like my *Osman*, charm'd th' admiring world.

Drew

Drew birth, tho' *Syrian*, from a christian-mother.

Se. What mean you, madam! Ah! you do not see!

Zara. Yes, yes—I see it all; I am not blind: I see my country, and my race condemn me; I see, that, spite of all, I still love *Osman*.— What! if I, now, go throw me at his feet, And tell him there sincerely what I am?

Se. Consider—That might cost your brother's life, Expose the christians, and betray you all.

Zara. You do not know the noble heart of *Osman*.

Se. I know him the protector of a faith, Sworn enemy to ours;—The more he loves, The less he will permit you, to profess Opinions which he hates: to-night, the priest, In private introduc'd, attends you here; You promis'd him admission—

Zara. Wou'd I had not! I promis'd too, to keep this fatal secret: My father's urg'd command requir'd it twice: I must obey, all dangerous as it is: Compell'd to silence, *Osman* is enrag'd, Suspicion follows, and I late his love.

Enter Osman.

Os. Madam! there was a time, when my charm'd heart
Made it a virtue to be lost in love;
When, without blushing, I indulg'd my flame;
And ev'ry day, still, made you dearer to me.
You taught me, madam, to believe, my love
Rewarded, and return'd—nor was that hope,
Methinks, too bold for reason: emperors,
Who chuse to figh, devoted at the feet
Of beauties, whom the world conceive their slaves,
Have fortune's claim, at least, to sure success:
But, 'twere profane to think of pow'r in love.
Dear, as my passion makes you, I decline
Possession of her charms, whose heart's another's;

You

You will not find me a weak, jealous lover,
By coarse reproaches giving pain to you,
And shaming my own greatness—wounded deeply,
Yet shunning, and disdaining low complaint,
I come—to tell you—

Zara. Give my trembling heart

A moment's respite—

Oz. That unwilling coldness,
Is the just prize of your capricious lightness;
Your ready arts may spare the fruitless pains,
Of colouring deceit with fair pretences;
I wou'd not wish to hear your slight excuses;
I cherish ignorance, to save my blushes.

Ozman, in ev'ry trial, shall remember,
That he is emperor—Whate'er I suffer,
'Tis due to honour, that I give up you,
And to my injur'd bosom, take despair,
Rather than, shamefully possets you, sighing,
Convinc'd those sighs were never meant for me—

Go, madam—you are free—from Ozman's
Pow'r.

Expect no wrongs, but see his face no more.

Zara. At last, 'tis come—the fear'd, the murd'ring
moment
Is come—and I am curs'd by earth and heav'n!
[Throws herself on the Ground.]

If it is true, that I am lov'd no more:

If you—

Oz. It is too true, my fame requires it;
It is too true, that I, unwilling, leave you:
That I, at once, renounce you, and adore.—

Zara!—you weep!

Zara. If I am doom'd to lose you,
If I must wander o'er an empty world,
Unloving, and unlov'd—Oh! yet, do justice
To the afflicted—do not wrong me doubly:
Punish me, if 'tis needful to your peace,
But say not, I deserv'd it—This, at least,
Believe—for, not the greatness of your soul
Is truth, more pure and sacred—no regret

Can touch my bleeding heart, for having lost
 The rank of her, you raise to share your throne :
 I know, I never ought to have been there ;
 My fate, and my defects require, I lose you :
 But, ah ! my heart was never known to *Osman*.
 May heaven, that punishes, for ever hate me,
 If I regret the loss of aught but you.

Os. Rise,—rise—this means not love !

[*Raises her.*]

Zara. Strike——strike me, heaven !
Os. What ! is it love, to force your self to wound
 The heart you wish to gladden ?——But I find,
 Lovers least know themselves, for I believ'd,
 That I had taken back the power I gave you ;
 Yet, see !—you did but weep, and have resum'd
 me !

Proud, as I am——I must confess, one wish
 Evades my power——the blessing to forget you.
Zara—Thy tears were form'd to teach disdain;
 That softness can disarm it.——'Tis decreed,
 I must, for ever love—but, from what cause,
 If thy consenting heart partakes my fires,
 Art thou reluctant to a blessing meant me ?
 Speak : Is it levity——or, is it fear ?
 Fear of a power, that, but for blessing thee,
 Had, without joy, been painful——Is it artifice ?
 Oh ! spare the needless pains——Art was not made
 For *Zara* ;——art, however innocent,
 Looks like deceiving :——I abhor'd it ever.

Zara. Alas ! I have no art, not ev'n enough,
 To hide this love, and this distress, you give me.

Os. New riddles ! speak with plainness to my soul ;
 What can't thou mean ?

Zara. I have no power to speak it.

Os. Is it some secret, dang'rous to my state ?
 Is it some christian plot grown ripe against me ?

Zara. Lives there a wretch so vile, as to betray you ?
Osman is bless'd, beyond the reach of fear ;
 Fears and misfortunes, threaten only *Zara*.

Os. Why, threaten *Zara* ?

Zara. Permit me, at your feet,

Thus,

Thus, trembling, to beseech a favour from you.

Osf. A favour ! Oh ! you guide the will of *Osfman*.

Zara. Ah ! wou'd to heaven, our duties were united,
Firm, as our thoughts and wishes !—But this day,
But this one sad, unhappy day, permit me,
Alone, and far divided from your eye,
To cover my distress, lest you, too tender,
Shou'd see, and share it with me—from to-morrow,
I will not have a thought conceal'd from you.

Osf. What strange disquiet ! from what stranger cause ?

Zara. If I am really bless'd with *Osfman's* love,
He will not, then, refuse this humble prayer.

Osf. If it must be, it must.—Be pleas'd—my will

Takes purpose from your wishes ;—and, consent
Depends, not on my choice, but your decree :
Go—but remember, how he loves, who thus,
Finds a delight in pain, because you give it.

Zara. It gives me more than pain, to make you feel
it.

Osf.—And can you, *Zara*, leave me ?

Zara. Alas ! my lord !

[*Exit Zara.*]

Osfman. [Alone.] It shou'd be, yet, methinks, too
soon to fly me !

Too soon, as yet, to wrong my easy faith ;
The more I think, the less can I conceive,
What hidden cause shou'd raise such strange despair !
Now, when her hopes have wings, and ev'ry wish
Is courted to be lively !—when I love,
And joy, and empire, press her to their bosom ;
When, not alone belov'd, but ev'n a lover !
Professing, and accepting ; bless'd, and blessing ;
To see her eyes, thro' tears shine mystick love !
'Tis madness ! and I were unworthy power,
To suffer longer, the capricious insult !
Yet, was I blameless ?—No—I was too rash ;
I have felt jealousy, and spoke it to her ;

I have

I have distrusted her —— and still she loves:
 Gen'rous atonement, that! and 'tis my duty
 To expiate by a length of soft indulgence,
 The transports of a rage, which still was love.
 Henceforth, I never will suspect her false;
 Nature's plain power of charming dwells about her,
 And innocence gives force to ev'ry word:
 I owe full confidence to all she looks,
 For in her eye shines truth, and ev'ry beam
 Shoots confirmation round her: —— I remark'd,
 Ev'n while she wept, her soul, a thousand times,
 Sprung to her lips, and long'd to leap to mine,
 With honest, ardent, ut'rance of her love. ——
 Who can possess a heart so low, so base,
 To look such tenderness, and yet have none?

Enter Melidor, with Orasmin.

Meli. This letter, great disposer of the world!
 Address'd to *Zara*, and in private brought,
 Your faithful guards, this moment intercepted,
 And humbly offer to your sovereign eye.

Oz. Come nearer; give it me. —— To *Zara*! —
 rise!

Bring it with speed —— Shame on your flatt'ring
 distance ——

[Advancing, and snatching the letter.
 Be honest, —— and approach me like a subject,
 Who serves the prince, yet not forgets the man.

Meli. One of the christan slaves, whom late your
 bounty

Releas'd from bondage, sought with heedful guile,
 Unnotic'd, to deliver it —— discover'd,
 He waits, in chains, his doom, from your decree.

Oz. Leave me —— I tremble, as if something
 fatal

Were meant me, from this letter — shou'd I read it?

Meli. Who knows but it contains some happy truth,
 That may remove all doubts, and calm your heart?

Oz. Be it as 'twill — it shall be read — my hands
 Have apprehenfion, that out-reaches mine!

Why

Why shou'd they tremble thus?—'Tis done—and now,
[Opens the letter.

Fate, be thy call obey'd—*Orasmin, mark*—

“ There is a secret passage, towards the mosque,
“ That way you might escape; and unperceiv'd,
“ Fly your observers, and fulfil our hope;
“ Despise the danger, and depend on me,
“ Who wait you, but to die, if you deceive.

Hell! tortures! death! and woman! — What?
Orasmin?

Are we awake? heard'st thou? Can this be *Zara*?

Oraf. Wou'd I had lost all sense—*for, what I heard,*

Has cover'd my afflicted heart with horror!

Osf. Thou see'st how I am treated?

Oraf. Monstrous treason!

To an affront, like this, you cannot—must not—
Remain insensible—You, who but now,
From the most slight suspicion, felt such pain,
Must, in the horror of so black a guilt,
Find an affectual cure, and banish love.

Osf. Seek her, this instant—go—*Orasmin, fly—*
Shew her this letter—bid her read, and tremble:
Then, in the rising horrors of her guilt,
Stab her unfaithful breast—and let her die—
Say, while thou strik'st—stay, stay—return, and pity
me:

I will think first, a moment—Let that christian
Be strait confronted with her—stay—I will!
I will—I know not what;—Wou'd I were dead,
Wou'd I had dy'd, unconscious of this shame!

Oraf. Never did prince receive so bold a wrong.

Osf. See, here, detected, this infernal secret!
This fountain of her tears, which my weak heart
Mistook for marks of tenderness and pain!
Why! what a reach has woman, to deceive!
Under how fine a veil of grief and fear,
Did she propose retirement, till to-morrow!

And I, blind dotard ! gave the fool's consent,
Sooth'd her, and suffer'd her to go ! — She parted,
Dissolv'd in tears ; and parted, to betray me !

Oras. Reflection serves but to confirm her guilt :
At length, resume yourself ; awaken thought ;
Assert your greatness ; and resolve like *O'sman*.

Oj. *Nerestan*, too ! — Was the boasted honour
Of that proud christian ? whom *Jerusalem*
Grew loud in praising ! whose half-envy'd virtue
I wonder'd at, myself ! and felt disdain,
To be but equal to a christian's greatness !
And does he thank me thus ? — base infidel !
Honest, pretending, pious, praying, villian !
Yet, *Zara* is a thousand times more base,
More hypocrite, than he ! — a slave ! a wretch !
So low, so lost, that ev'n the vilest labours,
In which he lay, condemn'd, cou'd never sink
him.

Beneath his native infamy ! — Did she not know,
What I have done, what suffer'd — for her sake ?

Oras. Cou'd you, my gracious lord ! forgive my
zeal !

You wou'd —

Oj. I know it — thou art right — I'll see her :
I'll tax her in thy presence : — I'll upbraid her : —
I'll let her learn — go — find, and bring her to me.

Oras. Alas ! my lord, disorder'd as you are,
What can you wish to say ?

Oj. I know not, now :
But I resolve to see her — — — left she think,
Her falsehood has, perhaps, the power to grieve me.

Oras. Believe me, sir, your threatenings, your
complaints,

What will they all produce, but *Zara*'s tears,
To quench this fancy'd anger ! your lost heart,
Seduc'd, against itself, will search but reasons,
To justify the guilt, which gives it pain :
Rather conceal, from *Zara*, this discovery ;
And let some trusty slave convey the letter,
Reclos'd to her own hand — then, shall you learn,
Spite of her frauds, disguise, and artifice,
The firmness, or abasement of her soul.

Oj.

Of. Thy counsel charms me! We'll about it now:

"Twill be some recompence, at least, to see
Her blushes, when detected —

Oras. Oh! my lord,
I doubt you in the trial — for, your heart —

Of. Distrust me not — my love, indeed, is weak,
But honour and disdain, more strong than *Zara*:
Here take this fatal letter — chuse a slave,
Whom yet she never saw, and who retains
His try'd fidelity — Dispatch — be gone —

[Exit *Oras* min.

Now, whither shall I turn my eyes and sleps
The surest way to shun her; and give time
For this discovering trial? — Heav'n! she's here!

Enter *Zara*.

So, madam! Fortune will befriend my cause,
And free me from your fetters: you are met,
Most ably, to dispel a new ris'n doubt,
That claims the finest of your arts to gloss it.
Unhappy each by other, it is time
To end our mutual pain, that both may rest:
You want not generosity, but love;
My pride forgotten, my obtruded throne,
My favours, cares, respect, and tenderness,
Touching your gratitude, provok'd regard;
'Till by a length of benefits, besieg'd,
Your heart submitted, and you thought 'twas
love;
But you deceiv'd yourself, and injur'd me.
There is, I'm told, an object, more deserving
Your loye, than *Osman* — I wou'd know his name?
Be just, nor trifle with my anger: tell me,
Now, while expiring pity struggles, faint;
While I have yet, perhaps, the pow'r to pardon:
Give up the bold invader of my claim,

E 2

And

And let him die to save thee.—Thou art known ;
Think, and resolve—While I yet speak, renounce
him ;

While yet the thunder rolls, suspended, stop it ;

Let thy voice charm me, and recall my soul,

That turns, averse, and dwells no more on *Zara* ?

Zara. Can it be *Osman*, speaks ? and speaks to *Zara* ?
Learn, cruel ! learn that this afflicted heart,
This heart, which heaven delights to prove, by tor-
tures,

Did it not love, has pride, and pow'r, to shun you :

Alas ! you will not know me ! What have I

To fear, but that unhappy love, you question ?

That love, which only, cou'd outweigh the shame,

I feel, while I descend, to weep my wrongs :

I know not, whether heaven, that frowns upon me,

Has destin'd my unhappy days, for yours ;

But, be my fate, or bless'd, or curs'd, I swear,

By honour, dearer ev'n than life, or love,

Cou'd *Zara* be but mistress of herself,

She wou'd, with cold regard, look down on kings,

And, you alone excepted, fly 'em all :

Wou'd you learn more, and open all my heart ?

Know, then, that spite of this renew'd injustice,

I do not,—cannot—wish to love you less ;

That long before you look'd so low, as *Zara*,

She gave her heart to *Osman*—Yours, before

Your benefits had bought her, or your eye

Had thrown distinction round her ; never had,

Nor ever will acknowledge, other lover—

And, to this sacred truth, attesting heaven !

I call thy dreadful notice ! If my heart

Deserves reproach, 'tis for, but not from, *Osman*.

Os. What ! does she, yet, presume to swear sincerity ?

Oh ! boldness of unblushing perjury !

Had I not seen, had I not read, such proof,

Of her light falsehood, as extinguish'd doubt,

I cou'd not be a man, and not believe her.

Zara. Alas ! my lord, what cruel fears have seiz'd
you ?

What harsh, mysterious words were those, I heard ?

Os.

O/. What fears shou'd *O'sman* feel, since *Zara* loves him !

Zara. I cannot live, and answer to your voice,
In that reproachful tone !—your angry eye
Trembles with fury, while you talk of love !

O/. Since *Zara* loves him ?

Zara. Is it possible,

O'sman should disbelieve it ?—Again, again,
Your late-repent'd violence returns ;
Alas ! what killing frowns you dart against me !
Can it be kind ? Can it be just, to doubt me ?

O/. No—I can-doubt no longer—you may retire.

[*Exit Zara.*

Re-enter Orafmin. —

Orafmin ! she's perfidious, ev'n beyond
Her sex's undiscover'd power of seeming :
She's at the topmost point of shameless artifice ;
An empress at deceiving !—Soft, and easy,
Destroying, like a plague, in calm tranquillity :
She's innocent, she swears — So is the fire :
It shines in harmless distance, bright, and pleasing,
Consuming nothing, till it, first, embraces —
Say ? hast thou chos'n a slave ?—Is he instructed ?
Haste, to detect her vileness ! and my wrongs.

Oraf. Punctual, I have obey'd your whole command ;
But, have you arm'd, my lord, your injur'd heart,
With coldness, and indifference ? Can you hear,
All painless ! and unmov'd, the false one's shame ?

O/. *Orafmin !* I adore her, more than ever !

Oraf. My lord, my emperor ! forbid it, heav'n !

O/. I have discern'd a gleam of distant hope ;
This hateful christian, the light growth of *France*,
Proud, young, vain, amorous, conceited, rash,
Has misconceive'd some charitable glance,
And judg'd it love, in *Zara* :—He, alone,
Then, has offended me.—Is it her fault,
If those, she charms, are indiscreet, and daring ?

Zara, perhaps, expected not this letter ;
 And I, with rashness, groundless, as its writer's,
 Took fire, at my own fancy, and have wrong'd her.
 Now, hear me, with attention—Soon as night
 Has thrown her welcome shadows o'er the palace ;
 When this *Nerestan*, this ungrateful christian,
 Shall lurk, in expectation, near our walls,
 Be watchful, that our guards surprize, and seize him ;—
 Then, bound in fetters, and o'erwhelm'd with shame,
 Conduct the daring traitor to my presence ;
 But, above all, be sure, you hurt not Zara :
 Mindful, to what supreme excess, I love.
 I feel, I must confess, a kind of shame,
 And blush, at my own tenderness—but, faith,
 Howe'er it seems deceiv'd, were weak, as I am,
 Cou'd it admit distrust; to blot its face,
 And give appearance way, till proof takes place.

End of the Fourth Act.



A C T V. S C E N E I

Z A R A and S E L I M A.

Zara. SOOTH me, no longer, with this vain de-
 fire;
 To a recluse, like me, who dares, henceforth,
 Presume admission !—The seraglio's shut—

Barr'd,

Barr'd, and unpassable—as death, to time !
My brother ne'er must hope to see me, more :
How now ! what unknown slave accosts us, hear !

Enter Mélidor.

Mel. This letter, trusted to my hands, receive,
In secret witness, I am, wholly, yours.

[*Zara reads the letters.*

Se. (Aside) Thou everlasting ruler of the world !
Shed thy wiftr'd mercy on our hopeless tears !
Redeem us from the hands of hated infidels,
And save my princess from the breast of *Osman*.

Zara. I wish, my friend, the comfort of your
counsel.

Se. Retire——you shall be call'd——wait near,
go, leave us.

(*Exit Melidor.*

Zara. Read this——and tell me, what I ought to
answer !

For I wou'd gladly hear my brother's voice.

Se. Say rather, you wou'd hear the voice of heav'n.
'Tis not your brother, calls you, but your God.

Zara. I know it, nor resist his awful will !
Thou know it, that I have bound my soul, by oath !
But, can I——ought I——to engage
myself,

My brother, and the christians in this danger !

Se. 'Tis not their danger, that alarms your fear !
Your love speaks loudest, to your shrinking soul !
I know your heart, of strength, to hazard all,
But, it has let in traitors, who surrender,
On poor pretence of safety :————learn
at least,

To understand, the weakness, that deceives you :
You tremble, to offend your haughty lover,
Whom wrongs, and outrage, but endear the more !
Yes——you are blind to *Osman*'s cruel nature,
That *Tartar*'s fierceness, that obscures his bounties :
This tyger, savage, in his tenderness,

Courts.

Courts, with contempt, and threatens, amidst softness ;
 Yet, cannot your neglected heart efface
 His fated, fix'd, impression !

Zara. What reproach

Can I, with justice, make him ? — I, indeed,
 Have given him cause to hate me ! —
 Was not his throne, was not his temple, ready ?
 Did not he court his slave, to be a queen ?
 And have not I declin'd it ! — I, who ought
 To tremble, conscious of affronted power !
 Have not I triumph'd o'er his pride, and love ?
 Seen him submit his own high will, to mine ;
 And sacrifice his wishes, to my weakness !

Se. Talk we, no more, of this unhappy passion ;
 What resolution will your virtue take !

Zara. All things combine, to sink me to despair :
 From the seraglio, death, alone, will free me.

I long to see the christians' happy climes,
 Yet, in the moment, while I form that prayer,

I sigh a secret wish, to languish, here :

How sad a state is mine ! my restless soul

All ign'rant, what to do, or what to wish !

My only perfect sense is, that of pain.

O, guardian heaven ! protect my brother's life :
 For I will meet him, and fulfil his prayer.

Then, when from Solyma's unfriendly walls,

His absence shall unbind his sister's tongue,

Osman shall learn the secret of my birth,

My faith unshaken, and my deathless love !

He will approve my choice, and pity me !

I'll send my brother word, he may expect me !

Call in the faithful slave — — — God of my fathers !

[Exit Selima.

Let thy hand save me, and thy will direct.

Enter Selima, and Melidor.

Go — tell the christian, who intrusted thee,
That Zara's heart is fix'd, nor shrinks at danger ;
And, that my faithful friend will, at the hour,
Expect, and introduce him, to his wish.

Away — the Sultan comes ; he must not find us.

[Exeunt Zara and Selima.]

Enter Ofman, and Orasmin.

Of. Swifter, ye hours, move on ; my fury glows—
Impatient, and wou'd push the wheels of time : —
How now ! What message dost thou bring ? Speak
boldly —

What answer gave she, to the letter sent her ?

Mel. She blush'd, and trembled, and grew pale, and
paus'd ;
Then blush'd, and read it ; and, again, grew pale ;
And wept, and smil'd, and doubted, and resolv'd :
For, after all this race of vary'd passions,
When she had sent me out, and call'd me back,
Tell him (she cry'd) who has intrusted thee,
That Zara's heart is fix'd, nor shrinks at danger ;
And, that my faithful friend will, at the hour,
Expect, and introduce him to his wish.

Of. Enough — be gone — I have no ear for more —

[To the slaves.]
Leave me, thou too, Orasmin. — Leave me life,
[To Orasmin.]

For, ev'ry mortal aspect moves my hate :
Leave me to my distraction — I grow mad,
And cannot bear the visage of a friend.
Leave me to rage, despair, and shame, and wrongs.
Leave me, to seek myself — and shun mankind.

[Alone.]

Whom am I ! — Heav'n ! Who am I ! What resolve I !

Zara ! Nerestan ! Sound those words like names

Decreed to join ! — Why pause I ! — Perish Zara —

Wou'd

Wou'd, I cou'd tear her image, from my heart :—
 'Twere happier, not to live, at all, than live
 Her scorn, the sport of an ungrateful false one !
 And sink the sovereign, in a woman's property.

Re-enter Orafmin.

Orafmin ! ——— Friend ! return ——— I cannot
 bear
 This absence, from thy reason : 'twas unkind,
 'Twas cruel, to obey me, thus distress'd,
 And wanting pow'r to think, when I had lost thee.
 How goes the hour ! Has he appear'd ! This rival !
 Perish the shameful sound ——— This villain chris-
 tian !

Has he appear'd, below !

Oraf. Silent, and dark,
 Th' unbreathing world is hush'd, as if it heard,
 And listen'd to, your sorrows.

Osf. O, treach'rous night !
 Thou lend'st thy ready veil, to ev'ry treason,
 And teeming mischief thrive, beneath thy shade.
 Orafmin ! prophet ! reason ! truth ! and love !
 After such length of benefits, to wrong me !
 How have I over-rated, how mistaken,
 The merit of her beauty ! — Did I not
 Forget, I was a monarch ? Did I remember,
 That Zara was a slave ! ——— I gave up all,
 Gave up tranquillity, distinction, pride,
 And fell, the shameful victim of my love !

Oraf. Sir ! Sovereign ! Sultan ! my imperial master !
 Reflect on your own greatness, and disdain
 The distant provocation.

Osf. Heard'st thou nothing ?

Oraf. My lord !

Osf. A noise like dying groans !

Oraf. I listen, but can hear nothing.

Osf. Again ! ——— look out ——— he comes ———

Oraf. Nor tread of mortal foot ——— nor voice I
 hear ! ———

The

The still seraglio lies, profoundly plung'd,
In death-like silence ! nothing stirs——The air
Is soft, as infants' sleep ; no breathing wind
Steals thro' the shadows to awaken night.

Of. Horrors a thousand times more dark, than these,
Benight my suff'ring soul——Thou dost not know
To what excess of tenderness, I lov'd her.
I knew no happiness, but what she gave me,
Nor cou'd have felt a mis'ry, but for her !
Pity this weakness——mine are tears, *Orasmin* !
That fall not oft nor lightly.

Oras. Tears !——Oh heaven !

Of. The first, which, ever, yet, unmann'd my eyes !
O ! pity Zara——pity me——*Orasmin* !
These but forerun the tears of destin'd blood.

Oras. Oh, my unhappy lord ! I tremble for you——

Of. Do——tremble at my suff'ring, at my love,
At my revenge, too, tremble——for, 'tis due,
And will not be deluded.

Oras. Hark ! I hear

The steps of men, along the neigb'ring wall !

Of. Fly——seize him——'tis *Nerestan* ! wait no chains,
But, drag him down, to my impatient eye.

[Exit *Orasmin*.]

Enter *Zara* and *Selima*, in the dark.

Za. Where art thou *Selima* ! Give me thy hand ;
It is so dark, I tremble, as I step,
With fears and startings, never felt till now !

Of. Damnation ! 'tis her voice ! the well-known
sound,
That has, so often, charm'd me into baseness !
Oh ! the perfidious hypocrite !——she goes,
To meet th' inviting infidel !——now, now,

[Drawing a dagger.
Revenge, stand firm, and intercept his wishes :——
Revenge ! on whom !——no matter——earth, and
heav'n,

Wou'd

Wou'd blush, shou'd I forbear : — now — *Zara,*
now ; [Drops the dagger.

I must not — cannot strike, the starting steel,
Unwilling flies my hand, and shuns to wound her.

Za. This is the private path — come nearer
lead me —

Are we not notic'd, think'it thou !

Se. Fear not, madam ;
It cannot, now, be long, ere we shall meet him.

Oz. That word has giv'n me back, my ebbing rage.
[Recovers the dagger.

Za. I walk in terror, and my heart forebodes :
Who's there ? — *Nerestan* ! Is it you ! — Oh !
welcome ! —

[Stabbing her.
Oz. This to thy heart — 'Tis not the traitor,
meets thee,
'Tis the betray'd — who writes it, in thy blood.

Za. Oh, gracious heaven ! receive my parting soul.
[Dies.

Oz. Soul ? — then revenge has reach'd thee — I
will, now,
Haste, from this fatal place — I cannot leave her !
Whom did I strike ! was this the act of love !
Swallow me earth ! — She's silent — *Zara's*
dead !
And, shou'd I live, to see returning day,
'Twill shew me but her blood, — — — shew me, left
joyless,
In a wide empty world, with nothing round me,
But penitence, and pain — and, yet, 'twas just ; —
Hark ! — destiny has sent her lover to me,
To fill my vengeance, and restore my joy.

Enter Orasmin, with Nerestan.

Approach, thou wretch ! thou more than curs'd ! come
nearer —

Thou !

The Tragedy of Z A R A

51

Thou ! who, in gratitude, for freedom gain'd,
Hast given me miseries, beyond thy own !
Thou heart of heroe, with a traytor's soul !
Go—reap thy due reward, prepare to suffer,
Whate'er inventive malice can inflict,
To make thee feel thy death, and perish, slow.
Are my commands obey'd ?

Oraf. All is prepar'd.

Oj. Thy wanton eyes look round, in search of her,
Whose love, descending to a slave, like thee,
From my dishonour'd hand, receiv'd her doom !
See ! where she lies.—

Ne. O, fatal, rash, mistake !

Oj. Dost thou behold her, slave ?

Ne. Unhappy sister !

Oj. Sister ! — Did'lt thou say sister ; if thou did'ft,
Bles me, with deafness, heaven !

Ne. Tyrant ! I did —
She was my sister — All, that, now, is left
thee,
Dispatch — From my distracted heart, drain,
next,

The remnant of the royal, christian, blood :

Old *Lusignan*, expiring, in my arms,
Sent his too wretched son, with his last blessing,
To his, now, murder'd daughter !

Wou'd, I had seen the bleeding innocent !

I wou'd have liv'd, to speak to her, in death ;

Wou'd have awaken'd, in her languid heart,

A livelier sense of her abandon'd god :

That god, who, left by her, forsook her, too,

And gave the poor, lost, suff'rer, to thy rage.

Oj. Thy sister ? *Lusignan*, her father—*Selima* !
Can this be true ; — and have I wrong'd thee, *Zara* !

Se. Thy love was all the cloud, 'twixt her, and
heav'n.

Oj. Be dumb—for thou art base, to add distraction,
To my, already, more, than bleeding, heart :
And was thy love sincere ?—What, then, remains ?

Ner. Why shou'd a tyrant hesitate, on murder ?
There, now, remains, but mine, of all the blood,

R

Which,

Which, thro' thy father's cruel reign and thine
Has, never, ceas'd to stream on Syria's sands ;
Restore a wretch to his unhappy race ;
Nor hope, that torments, after such a scene,
Can force one feeble groan, to feast thy anger.
I waste my fruitless words, in empty air ;
The tyrant, o'er the bleeding wound, he made,
Hangs his unmoving eye, and heeds not me.

Oz. O, Zara ! —

Oras. Alas ! my lord, return—whither wou'd grief
Transport your gen'rous heart ;—this christian dog—

Oz. Take off his fetters, and observe my will :
To him, and all his friends, give instant liberty :
Pour a profusion, of the richest gifts,
On these unhappy christians ; and, when heap'd,
With vary'd benefits, and charg'd, with riches,
Give 'em safe conduct, to the nearest port.

Oras. But, sir ! —

Oz. Reply not, but obey. —

Fly—nor dispute thy master's last command,
Thy prince, who orders— and thy friend, who loves
thee !

Go—lose no time—farewell—be gone—and thou !
Unhappy warrior ! — yet, less lost, than I ! —

Haste, from our bloody land — and, to thy own,
Convey this poor, pale, object of my rage :

Thy king, and all his christians when they hear

Thy miseries : shall mourn 'em, with their tears ;
But if thou tell'st 'em mine, and tell'st 'em, truely,
They, who shall hate my crime, shall pity me.

Take, too this poignard, with thee, which my hand
Has stain'd with blood, far dearer, than my own ;

Tell 'em—with this, I murder'd, her, I lov'd ;
The noblest, and most virtuous, among women !

The soul of innocence, and pride of truth !

Tell 'em I laid my empire at her feet ;

Tell 'em, I plung'd my dagger in her blood ;

Tell 'em, I so ador'd— and, thus, reveng'd her,

[Stabs himself.]

Rev'rence this hero— and conduct him, safe. [Dies.]
[Ner.]

Ner. Direct me, great inspirer of the soul !
How I shou'd act, how judge, in this distress !
Amazing grandeur ! and detested rage !
Ev'n I, amidst my tears, admire this foe,
And mourn his death, who liv'd, to give me woe.

End of the Fifth Act.

E P I L O G U E.

Spoke by Mrs. CLIVE.

HERE, take a surfeit, sirs, of being jealous ;
And shun the pains, that plague those Turkish
fellows :
Where love and death join hands, their darts con-
founding.
Save us, good heav'n ! from this new-way of wound-
ing !
Curs'd climate ! — where, to cards, a lone-left woman
Has only, one of her black-guards, to summon !
Sighs, and fits mop'd, with her tame breast to gaze at :
And, that cold treat, is all the game she plays at !
For — shou'd she once, some abler hand be trying,
Poignard's the word ! — and, the first deal is — dying !
'Slife ! shou'd the bloody whim get round, in Britain,
Where women's freedom has such heights to fit on ;
Daggers, provok'd, wou'd bring to desolation :
And murder'd belles un-people half the nation ! —
Fain wou'd I help this play, to move compassion ;
And live, to bunt suspicion out of fashion. —
Four motives, strongly recommend, to lovers,
Hate of his weakness, that our scene discovers :

First

EPILOGUE.

First then—A woman will, or won't—depend on't:
If she will do't, she will:—and, there's an end on't.
But, if she won't,—since safe and sound your trust is,
Fear is affront; and jealousy injustice.

Next,—He who bids his dear do what she pleases,
Blunts wedlock's edge! and all its torture eases:
For—not to feel your suff'rings, is the same,
As not to suffer:—all the diff'rence—name:

Thirdly—The jealous husband wrongs his honour!
No Wife goes lame, without some hurt upon her:
And, the malicious world will still be guessing,
Who, oft, dines out, dislikes his own cook's dressing.

Fourthly, and lastly, to conclude my lecture,
If you wou'd fix the inconstant wife—respect her.
She who perceives her virtues over-rated,
Will fear to have th' account more justly stated:
And, borring from her pride, the good wife's seeming
Grow really such—to merit your esteeming.

R. I. N. J. S.



